Abstract

According to the prior art, the determination of edge picture elements and that of moiré picture elements are separately executed, with image data retouching executed by still another processing, resulting in complex processing and configuration.

By acquiring image data from an image input device such as a color scanner 20, differences of tone levels of picture elements constituting these image data from surrounding picture elements are figured out, the distribution of these differences of tone levels is prepared, and integrated processing based on this distribution makes it possible to determine whether each picture element is an edge picture element, a moiré picture element or an intermediate picture element. Then according to the determination, a sharpening filter is applied if the picture elements are edge picture elements, a smoothing filter is applied if they are moiré picture elements, or the tones of the original image are held if they are intermediate picture elements. This way of image data retouching makes it possible to carry out the whole execution from determination to retouching in a serial process. This facilitates simplification of the flow of processing from determination to image data retouching, and at the same time speeding up the processing. Thus the user of the color copying machine 10 is enabled to acquire prints of

appropriately retouched images at higher speed.